

# Jackson Elementary

December 4, 2014



Dear families,

Our school district believes it is important to inform the families we work with that we, as a district team, have been currently doing an extensive research on the accelerated reading program (AR) that is implemented in schools around the world. As of now, our district does not implement this program however feel it necessary to examine the positives and negatives about such a widely used program. With the research we have collected, we hope families take into account how crucial reading instruction is and why we value collecting data on the best-practice methods in the field to help your children succeed. Below we have provided you with some of the details to the program and the pros and cons that we have examined to further our decision making.

## Accelerated Reader: What is it?

Accelerated Reader (AR) is a program developed by Renaissance Learning and is a software-based program that allows for the monitoring of student's reading achievement. Students pick from a selected list of books, read the chosen book, and take an online, comprehension quiz based on the book. Schools often keep track of student's points and use that for assessment and/or motivation. This program is used in over 75,000 schools around the world by primary and secondary schools.

### Pros:

Choice in book selection (from list)

### Cons:

Limited freedom to other books

Motivates students to read

Lack of critical-thinking, application skills

Extrinsic rewards used often

Publicity of achievement

Foundation for reading

Decreased self-perception

No purpose to the learning

Lacks evidence for struggling readers

Based on the list above, we hope our families understand that this was just for research and no actions have been taken on an implementation. We also feel it is important for families to know how much of an impact they play for their child's reading. We encourage reading to play a big part in your homes to help develop and increase your child's interest in reading. If there are any questions or concerns related to the research we are conducting, feel free to contact the district office or your child's school. Thank you for your time in reading this newsletter about the research that is taking place.

Sincerely,

Superintendent Lindsey Kastner

Contact: [kastnl00@uwosh.edu](mailto:kastnl00@uwosh.edu) or 262-345-897